



DONALD L. WOLFE, Director

COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE

REFER TO FILE: PD-5

September 29, 2005

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**SIERRA HIGHWAY OVER THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGIONAL
RAILROAD AUTHORITY
CITY OF SANTA CLARITA-COUNTY COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
SUPERVISORIAL DISTRICT 5
3 VOTES**

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD:

1. Acting as a responsible agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), consider the enclosed Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion, including comments received during the public review process, which was prepared for the Sierra Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation project by the City of Santa Clarita and subsequently approved by the State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration, find that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment, and find that the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion reflects the independent judgment of the County, and approve the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion.

2. Acting as a responsible agency pursuant to the CEQA, consider and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (Section 5.0 of the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion), which was prepared and adopted by the City of Santa Clarita as a condition of the project to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.
3. Authorize the Director of Public Works, or his designee, to negotiate and execute a cooperative Agreement with the City of Santa Clarita, in substantially the same form as the enclosed Agreement, for a project to replace and rehabilitate the existing bridges on Sierra Highway over the Southern California Regional Railroad Authority (SCRRA). The Agreement provides for the City to perform the preliminary engineering and administer the construction of the project under the Federal Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation (HBRR) Program and to utilize Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) grant funds to finance the non-Federally reimbursable local agency share of the construction cost. The City of Santa Clarita is to use other City funds to finance the local agency share of the preliminary engineering costs. Under the terms of the Agreement, if the non-Federally reimbursable local agency share of the construction cost exceeds the available MTA grant funds, the County is to finance its jurisdictional share of the amount in excess of the MTA grant funds, up to a maximum contribution of \$150,000.

PURPOSE/JUSTIFICATION OF RECOMMENDED ACTION

The County and the City of Santa Clarita propose to replace the northbound bridge and rehabilitate the southbound bridge on Sierra Highway over the SCRRA. The southbound bridge is entirely within the City of Santa Clarita and the northbound bridge is jurisdictionally shared between the City of Santa Clarita and the County. Your Board's approval is necessary for the delegation of responsibilities and the cooperative financing of the project. This proposal is authorized and provided for by the provisions of Section 6500, et seq. of the Government Code.

Implementation of Strategic Plan Goals

This action meets the County Strategic Plan Goal of Service Excellence. By improving the safety of Sierra Highway over SCRRA bridges, residents of the City of Santa Clarita and the unincorporated County area who travel on these bridges will benefit and their quality of life will be improved.

FISCAL IMPACT/FINANCING

The construction cost of the project is estimated to be \$6,747,000, with the reimbursement under the Federal HBRR Program estimated to be \$5,397,000. The City has secured \$1,999,000 in MTA grant funds to finance the non-Federally reimbursable local agency share of the construction cost, currently estimated to be \$1,350,000. If the project costs increase significantly and the non-Federally reimbursable local agency share of the construction cost exceeds the available MTA grant funds, the County will finance its jurisdictional share of the amount in excess of the MTA grant funds, up to a maximum contribution of \$150,000. Funding for the County's maximum contribution of \$150,000 is included in the Fiscal Year 2005-06 Road fund budget.

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

The proposed Agreement provides for the City of Santa Clarita to perform the preliminary engineering and administer the construction of the project under the Federal HBRR Program and to utilize MTA grant funds to finance the non-Federally reimbursable local agency share of the construction cost. The City of Santa Clarita is to use other City funds to finance the local agency share of the preliminary engineering costs. Under the terms of the Agreement, if the non-Federally reimbursable local agency share of the construction cost exceeds the available MTA grant funds, the County is to finance its jurisdictional share of the amount in excess of the MTA grant funds, up to a maximum contribution of \$150,000. The City is to finance its jurisdictional share of the amount in excess of the MTA grant funds and any amount in excess of the County's maximum contribution.

Prior to execution by the Director of Public Works, or his designee, the amendment will be executed by the City and approved as to form by County Counsel.

ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTATION

On December 2, 2002, the City of Santa Clarita, as the lead agency, circulated the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion for the Sierra Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation project in accordance with CEQA requirements. The mitigation measures included in the CEQA documents for the project specifically addresses biological resources, hazardous materials, hydrology and water quality,

transportation/traffic, and noise. The Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion concluded that the project with the proposed mitigation measures will not have a significant effect on the environment. The public comment period did not raise significant environmental issues with the project; therefore, the City of Santa Clarita finalized and adopted the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion on July 8, 2003.

On July 17, 2003, the City of Santa Clarita filed a Notice of Determination for the Sierra Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation project with the County Clerk in accordance with the requirements of Section 21152 of the California Public Resources Code.

Under the CEQA, the County is a responsible agency whose discretionary approval of the project is required in order for the City of Santa Clarita to carry out the project. As a responsible agency, your Board must consider and adopt the Mitigated Negative Declaration/Categorical Exclusion and Mitigation Monitoring Program prepared by the City of Santa Clarita before the Sierra Highway Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation project is approved and prior to the execution of the enclosed Agreement.

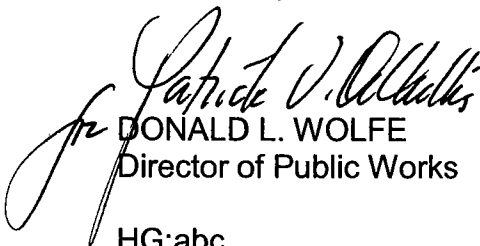
IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES (OR PROJECTS)

Sierra Highway is on County's Highway Plan, and the proposed improvements are needed and of general County interest.

CONCLUSION

Upon approval, please return three adopted copies of this letter to Public Works.

Respectfully submitted,


DONALD L. WOLFE
Director of Public Works

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Enc.

cc: Chief Administrative Office, County Counsel